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Rep. John Espinoza
S1187 House Office Building
P. O. Box 30014
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7914

Re: HB 4551

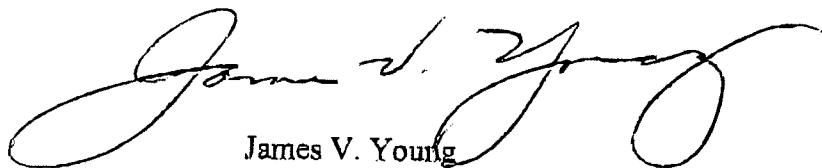
Dear Rep. Espinoza:

I am writing in support of HB 4551, which is currently before the Judiciary Committee. I am sorry that I am unable to attend the committee hearing. I would offer this letter as my support of your bill, and the changes it proposes to MCL 750.50 and 750.506.

The suggested changes in this bill will allow prosecuting attorneys effective charges and penalties against individuals who subject animals to unnecessary suffering. As the prosecutor who handled the matter involving the Washington Township individuals for whom your bill was the result, I was left with two choices: a misdemeanor or a felony involving hogs, sheep, goats, steer and a horse, dogs, chickens and snakes. I believed that the facts of the case and the law to be applied warranted six (6) misdemeanor charges, and I was subject to a great deal of criticism due to the deplorable conditions that the animals were found (some of which were dead).

This bill clears the ambiguity for acts against animals, and provides for stiff penalties. This bill provides a strong foundation in the fight against animal abuse and cruelty, and I strongly support HB 4551.

Sincerely,



James V. Young
Prosecuting Attorney

JVY:pm

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